Mark

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Mark

by black_dranzer_1119

Summary

Most people when they are born, are born with a mark. This mark would then help them find the person, or people, they are destined for. Will was not one of these people.

Notes

I know I said one of the next two would be the Hannibal Creature fic, but then I got caught up with this AU, though I am still working on the other one.

See the end of the work for more notes

When Hannibal was young, his mother would tell him stories about the person he would one day meet; his chosen one; the one who would be his everything; his soul's mate, if you will. That person would then stand by Hannibal, no matter what and he would ***never*** have to be alone again. She would often then try and tell him that people had the potential for more than one soul mate and they would fit together in different ways, but Hannibal didn't particularly care about those others, just that one. Hannibal wanted to know if they would be as pretty as she was, as smart and kind, all the traits that princes and princesses had in the girly stories she would tell and he would say that he didn't listen to.

When he would ask these questions, she would always have the same reply. *'I don't know, but beauty is only skin deep and so I can only hope that they are interesting enough that you are never bored and kind enough that you are never lonely.'* While she spoke, she would often rub circles on the mark at the back of his neck. Hers was on the inside of her left elbow and his father's was the same: soul mates.

Later when Mischa was born, he checked her little body, but there was only a slightly protruding dot on the back of her right ear. That mark was often referred to as an 'egg' and it meant that their soul mate was not yet born. For the three weeks after he found out about that, he would check behind her ear to see if it had 'hatched' and every day it stayed the same. Disappointed, he would go to his mother and tell her that it hadn't hatched and she would laugh and pick him up and tell him about his soul mate. Due to the positioning of his own mark, he had not managed to see what his own was and he never asked.

Later, when his mother and father had died and his sister was gone, Hannibal realised, he had never asked what happened if your soul mate dies.

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William Graham was born without a mark. While not exactly rare, it was more commonly seen in countries with higher rates of infant mortality. His mother cried for him that day and she never really stopped. Will was never told what happened, and when he got older his father just said that depression can sometimes happen after pregnancy and that no one was to blame for her being gone. Will did have to wonder how his father was coping with it sometimes and often when he was bored; he would go and watch his father for a while. His father was a very quiet man and would often keep to himself, so when he didn't know Will was watching, Will would be and he would try and imagine how his dad was feeling.

His teachers and the books he read, all told him that it was very difficult for a person to cope with losing their soul mate; but they never really said how a person coped if they never had one. His father was lonely though, Will could tell, but there was nothing Will could do, except watch as his father kept running and never looked back.

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When Hannibal was twelve, his egg hatched and he felt it ooze out of the mark at the base of his skull. Until that day he had not known it was an egg, part of him had not wanted to, it was only important that something was there, or at least would be. Though he had not wanted to hear it at the time, there were cases where eggs had dissolved, rather than hatch. That was not important though, what was important was that somewhere his soul's mate had just been born and now all he had to do was find them.

That was easier said than done, however and by the time he was halfway through med school, he was beginning to wonder if they were even in the same country. He had chosen to study medicine, partly as a way to gain access to medical records; though the further he pursued it, the more he came to appreciate the elegance it leant towards his more… creative pursuits. It was just unfortunate that his audience tended to lack the same appreciation.

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By the time Will had reached high school, he had been placed firmly in two categories, non-risk and/or non-committal, which basically translated to, he had no mark and so he was in no danger of leaving a person for someone else, while if they wanted, they could date him until they found who they were looking for and leave him. Will had been fourteen when he found out those lovely pieces of information and he stopped dating soon after. The labels remained despite that, only now they meant that he might as well have neutered himself, since he was now the guy that all the girls went to in order to discuss what they didn't understand about boys. The fact that Will could then empathise with their situation so clearly, led to a lot more complications and a much more confusing adolescence than he was sure most went through.

In fact, by that point it had become something of a blessing that he rarely stayed in one place for very long and so by the time he had finished high school he was well practiced in the art of staying on the fringes. That, and people watching, since he figured that would be about as much human contact as he could handle. It was only a bonus, later on, that there was a profession based around the concept.

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When his pursuit of medicine no longer provides the challenges he was searching for, Hannibal decides to switch his gaze to the insides that cannot be fully seen with the eyes. Within the bounds of psychiatry, Hannibal was given the gift of both healing and absolute destruction. The ability to change a person's life in a way that is far more subtle than

anything he could do with a blade and far more lasting. The sense of control he has over these people's lives was intoxicating and yet given so freely. They even paid him to do so. He improves their lives and they are grateful to him. For them he is a source of stability, an anchor for them when they are lost in a storm. He does not judge them for being lesser beings and only makes examples out of those who are less than even that. He did not delude himself into believing he was doing God's work, rather, he was doing his own work and that was far more satisfying.

Since the discovery of 'soul mates', the human population had been tilted on its head and the pressure to find a person's true match became a problem unsolved for generations. For the most part, an increasing number of people had chosen to ignore their mark; however studies revealed that those relationship tended to have more difficulties due to the social stigma attached, as well as the unconscious self berating, which led to high rates depression and suicide. It was then no surprise that psychiatrists and psychologists played essential roles in society, or that Hannibal tended to prefer his own company… except when he was feeling creative.

With the creation of the computer and the internet, however, an international website had been created with the purpose of finding a person's match. This system inevitably became abused, however, the dangers of it not existing were too great for it not to and people worked on it around the clock to keep it maintained. Despite this, people became doubtful and less used the site. As it was, Hannibal had not even seen his mark, let alone posted a picture of it and he was content with that. He did not, after all, desire to depend on the existence of anyone.

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Will wasn't surprised when he was rejected as a possible candidate for the FBI, despite his degrees and years of serving as a homicide detective.

Too ***unstable***.

He wasn't sure which part of the reason was worse, that it was partly due to his ability to empathise, or the fact that he was unmarked. People who were unmarked had higher rates of instability, which frequently manifested in acts of crime and were commonly believed to be attention seekers. Will knew he wasn't like that. He didn't want attention and would be happy just to live out his days with his ridiculous amount of dogs, but he had the idea that his imagination could be helpful in some way. If he could see why people were doing what they did, wouldn't that be useful in catching them? He didn't mention this in his application though, and he wondered if he was scared what they would say, or if it would even matter at all.

Fortunately, another, far preferable job opened shortly after and he took a post as a teacher at the FBI academy. He couldn't say he was the greatest teacher around, and he preferred the students to email him if they had questions, rather than actually meet with them, but

considering that he had not been eligible to attend, he viewed his situation with a large amount of irony. This was also how he first met Alana Bloom.

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Before too long, Hannibal was once again in the position of the mentor, rather than the student, a position he much preferred and worked hard to maintain. That is not to say that he enjoyed teaching, as he far too often was forced to deal with people who were either rude, lazy or both and unfortunately he could only dispose of one, or possibly two if he was exceptionally careful, without attracting suspicion. Fortunately not all of them were like that and that is how Alana Bloom first came to his attention.

Not only was she beautiful, she was also young, about ten years his junior at an estimate, polite and talented. In fact, Miss Bloom had all the markings for having a very bright and successful future; with the right guidance of course. Hannibal could be that guide. It would mean working longer hours and in close proximity with her, but the advantage of being the object of her attention, even if it was only the appearance of being it, would soften his image, as well as create the potential for a future contact, which was always useful. It would be years, however, before he would realise just how useful she could be. After all, she enabled him to meet Will Graham.

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If it had been up to Will, the only time he would have anything to do with psychoanalysis would be when he had to teach it… maybe not even then; and this had nothing to do with analysing the behaviour patterns of a criminal. Alana Bloom had proven to be more persistent than he would have given ***anyone*** credit for being and managed to somehow achieve her objective whilst never actually being alone in a room with him for an instant.

In saying that, however, he had not actually agreed to attend an actual session with a psychiatrist, but the dinner they would be attending would be an introduction to one, who Alana assured him, was highly recommended. If this introduction was to go well, which he doubted, Will promised that he would attend a couple of sessions with the doctor. This deal had a double edge to it, however, in that if it didn't go well and Will didn't think that they would be compatible, Hannibal would be assisting in finding another person who he could be referred to. So it was with complete and utter resignation that had Will buttoning up the best shirt he owned, with matching pants and coat and leaving the warm comfort of his dogs and home behind him.

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When Hannibal first heard of Will Graham, he must admit, he found the idea of the man an intriguing one. Alana had been most tight lipped about the subject, a conscious act of both distancing and protection, but not from him. No, if Alana was going to protect Will from Hannibal, she would not have Hannibal doing this little… performance tonight. Who Alana was protecting Will from was herself. This in itself was interesting enough, as it showed that Will was interesting to Alana in way that could not only be considered impolite, but possibly even demeaning.

Extrapolating from he knew, he was more than likely dealing with a person with an anxiety disorder and also taking from the fact that this was only an introduction and not an actual session, Will Graham more than likely had a distrust, even, potentially, a fear of people in Hannibal's line of work. Adding in Alana's protective, though guilty, behaviour showed that she wasn't the only one who recognised Will's behaviour as different and it more than likely has had a negative impact on Will's self-image. He would not be unattractive either, and quite possibly give off an air of vulnerability which would be exploited. Finally, his anxiety has presented itself in a way that is uncommon to such a degree that Alana would have him for her own patient, would it not interfere with their personal and professional relationship.

Now Hannibal's thoughts had muddled at this point, due to the fact that the man most likely demonstrated signs of instability and yet was working at the FBI Academy. The FBI would have measures to detect instability, so he wouldn't be a field agent or have ever been one. Alana said she occasionally filled in for Will when he needed time off, so his field was psycho-analysis. ***Oh Will, you place yourself in a room of mirrors and then try to avoid your own gaze.*** The study of the psychological did have its draws for those who believe themselves to have difficulties with it… any further speculations would be unwise, however and he was grasping at straws as it was. Will would be arriving with Alana in a matter of hours and Hannibal had a dinner to prepare.

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Will was very glad of the suit he was wearing when he arrived at Hannibal's home. It was almost picturesque and Will could tell that the owner had an eye for detail and knew how to balance wealth with taste. His mobile going off made him jump, and pulled him immediately out of his thoughts. It was a text; more than likely from Alana, as he was not able to see her car, now that he was looking for it.

Sorry Will, I won't be able to make it. A situation came up with one of my patients and I can't leave. If you want to postpone the introduction, we can, Alana

Will frowned at the text. Occasionally he received his texts after a delay, but it didn't help his situation any and now he was faced with the awkward situation of deciding whether to stay or

leave, while on the doctor's doorstep. After an hour's drive, to say nothing of the fact that he was expected to attend, it would not only be rude, but also cowardly to back out so late; he only wished that Alana had thought to call when he hadn't replied. Making up his mind, he opened a reply text, while swearing that it wasn't a delaying tactic.

Sorry for the delay, I only just received your text. In any case I have just arrived and it wouldn't be right to leave now. Good luck with your patient, Will

Sending the text, Will heaved out a breath, shoved the phone in his pocket and squared his shoulders. It was only then that he remembered the wine that he had brought, feeling the need to contribute something and he had been assured that it was a very fine vintage. Will suddenly wondered if Doctor Lecter had noticed his arrival, as Will had been outside for quite a while now and he felt his cheeks redden in embarrassment. Still, there was no time like the present, as they say and so he walked up to the door and knocked. This was going to be a disaster.

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When Alana had called two hours previous, Hannibal had been concerned that it would mean a delay in his meeting with Will; however, that did not seem to be the case, as Hannibal had been told that as far as Alana was aware, Will would still be coming. The timing of Alana's patient's breakdown now appeared quite fortuitous, as he would now have the advantage of greeting Will, alone and at Hannibal's home, no less. That isn't to say that Hannibal would not have still had the advantage whilst at the office, but visiting a stranger's home for dinner would leave anyone unbalanced and it is then that people are at their most revealing.

When Will arrived, Hannibal was adding a few last minute touches to the entrée; a plate of light, almost finger food which would help to stimulate the appetite and provide a baseline for the main course. The white wine that he had chosen would also add a sweetness that would not overshadow the savoury dish, but enhance both. Now all he had to do was wait for Will to knock at the door.

Seven minutes passed and still he waited. The entrée was complete and if it was to sit for much longer it could be ruined. It was a very delicate dish and was difficult to prepare, but he had wished to impress. Walking over to the door to make sure that Will had not simply driven away, Hannibal heard the knock he had been waiting for and opened the door as soon as he reached it.

Will was almost exactly as he had imagined him to be and at the same time quite different. While Hannibal had been right about Will's attractive fragility, the man had clearly put an effort into his appearance, far beyond that which he normally would. He was as skittish as a deer and his eyes never once strayed near the vicinity of Hannibal's own. He was wearing a black suit, which he more than likely wore to most of his formal events, though it had little wear, and a dark red shirt, which was more than likely advised to Will, as it complimented his skin, rather than anything Will would have chosen for himself.

‘Good evening, Doctor Lecter…?’

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‘And you must be Will Graham,’ Lecter said, with a light almost smile. From the sound of his voice, Will could tell the man’s background was European, though whereabouts and how long he had spent there was a lot harder to tell, he was also the exact opposite of everything Will was. Doctor Lecter wore a blue, three-piece-suit as easily as if he were born wearing it, though it was more likely through practice. Every aspect of the man was carefully maintained, from his hair to his nails and Will… well he really needed to stop analysing the man. ‘Please, come in.’

Will nodded to the doctor and walked inside and he couldn’t help wondering if this was a very bad idea. ‘Did Alana call?’

‘Yes she did and I was very disappointed,’ Lecter said, leading Will into the kitchen.

‘I’m sorry I didn’t call earlier, I only just received her text when I arrived,’ Will said awkwardly and he felt more awkward just standing there in that pristine house. Even though Will could see that Lecter had been and still was cooking, it was ordered and not the complete mess that his kitchen descended into at meal times, though to be fair, he did also have dogs to feed. ‘Oh, and I brought this,’ he added, passing Lecter the bottle. ‘I wasn’t sure what to bring, but I was assured that this was a very nice dessert wine.’

‘You have chosen wisely. Yes, this will go very well with what I have been preparing,’ Lecter said, taking the wine and Will noticed that inside Lecter’s fridge was a special compartment for wine cooling. ‘Now, if you follow me into the dining room, I will serve the entrée. I hope you do not suffer from any allergies, I did ask Alana, but she said she did not know.’

‘No, I don’t,’ Will said and looked around. Like the other rooms, the dining room also demonstrated a simple elegance which Will could have never hoped to replicate. ‘You have a very beautiful home Doctor Lecter.’

‘Thank you, that is very kind of you to say so,’ Lecter said, showing Will to his seat and then leaving to get the food. He returned shortly after and Will didn’t know whether to be more astonished at Lecter’s ability to balance the plates or what was on them.

‘Wow, I don’t think that I have eaten such amazing looking food at a restaurant,’ Will said, as his plate was placed before him.

‘Well food isn’t just for looking at,’ Lecter hinted and Will carefully cut off a slice and ran it through the sauce before taking a bite, noticing that Doctor Lecter was still watching.

‘Even better than it looks,’ Will said, and it was. The whole atmosphere had almost a surreal quality to it and he was finding it hard to believe any of this was real. That seemed to satisfy

Lecter and he began to eat too, though with more elegance.

‘So Will, why do you believe Alana referred you to me?’

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If it had not been for Alana, Hannibal would never have had the opportunity to meet such an interesting creature. From the offset, Hannibal could tell Will Graham was a man who felt deeply and was scarred because of it. Will also had a quick mind and associations came easily to him, though he struggled with them.

From before they even met, Will had no intention of allowing Hannibal to be his psychiatrist, but he dressed up so that it appeared that he was at least making an effort towards that end. Will was not the type to go out of his way to give offence and would probably desire to go by relatively unnoticed. This did not mean the man did not have teeth when cornered; only Hannibal would not allow himself to be harmed by them. Still, if they were to make any progress at all, Hannibal would need to be direct, and so he was.

‘Excuse me?’ Will said, clearly startled, as Hannibal had intended.

‘Alana has only told me your name and where you met, she has not told me why she is recommending you to me,’ Hannibal said and then enjoyed another mouthful of food. He found that sales assistant was much more palatable while on a fork.

‘So you have no idea why I am here?’ Will said, his voice rising, though Hannibal had expected that.

‘I do have some ideas, but I want to know why you think you are here, not why I do,’ Hannibal said carefully. In situations like Will’s, the patient would often exhibit denial, unless they were made to confront the situation in their own minds and came to the conclusion on their own.

‘I have what you could call an overly active imagination, though it has been called other things, but all it comes down to is that I can empathise with anyone, even if what I am looking at is just the result of their actions,’ Will said and Hannibal could see that already Will was being put off his food, but was trying not to be rude.

‘Associations come easily to you,’ Hannibal said and Will huffed out a breath, placing the knife and fork on the table, giving up the pretext.

‘So do forts,’ Will said and took a drink of wine to distract himself.

‘That must be very difficult for you in your line of work, I doubt there is any aspect of your life this does not touch,’ Hannibal said and this was very fascinating. For someone like himself, who could not recall a moment where he experienced the depth of feeling Will

experienced on a daily basis, made Hannibal all the more curious to analyse the full extent of Will's difficulties. 'I imagine this is why you are not fond of eye contact.'

'They see too much, they don't see enough and it is too easy to become distracted by irrelevant details,' Will said, deliberately looking up at Hannibal's face, though not at his eyes. Hannibal could almost sense Will's tension and anymore of it and Will would stop answering questions, or worse, leave.

'Quid pro quo, yes or no?'

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This was definitely a mistake, was all Will could think about as he was answering Lecter's questions. How he had allowed Alana to talk him into this… well that would never happen again and she could just take concern and… use it on someone who needed it. He just felt bad that a meal that was this amazing had to be ruined by the conversation. It did make him wonder how Lecter was ever considered to be such an excellent psychiatrist, so he was not expecting the question when it was asked.

'Quid pro quo?'

'You have questions, I have questions, I offer an exchange of answers,' Lecter said, as though what he was proposing was truly that simple and not a blatant attempt at invading his privacy.

'I don't find you all that interesting doctor,' Will said, trying to put a halt to the matter before it could go any further.

'You will,' came the easy response of a narcissist who was used to getting his own way. 'If it helps, you may ask the first question.'

'No, it really doesn't,' Will murmured and Lecter pretended to ignore him. 'Fine,' Will said and racked his brain for a question that was invasive enough to deter any further questioning. While he did so, he noticed an absence of photos and he tried to think if he had seen any on the way in. He didn't think he had. 'Have you got a mark Doctor Lecter?'

'As in a soul mate mark?' Lecter said, giving the appearance of being startled. 'Yes, I do believe so, though I have not looked at it. It is in a rather difficult location.'

Will frowned. He hadn't heard of anyone deciding not to look at their mark before, even those that had chosen to ignore it.

'I believe it is my question now,' Lecter said and Will, nodded, knowing he was going to get the bad end of this bargain. 'You say you build forts to keep things at a distance; describe them to me.'

‘Well they’re not actually forts…’ Will said, not even really sure how to begin answering this.

‘I am aware of that. Real forts would hold no meaning to you and thus would come to you neither quickly, nor easily,’ Lecter said and Will had to agree. The truth was, he couldn’t even remember what a real fort looked like. ‘No, the best mental forts are those that made from a place of safety. Where is that place for you, Will?’

‘Th-that’s two questions,’ Will said in an attempted protest, but Lecter didn’t even respond, knowing that it was just a delaying tactic. ‘Okay, to answer both questions, when I was younger my father went away a lot as a way of coping after my mother died. Then when I got old enough to feed and take care of myself it was occasionally for days at a time, but before he left we would build a fort out of sheets and chairs and he would tell me to go in there if I had nightmares. The floor would be covered in pillows, some of them his and I would bring my dog Scrappy with me. He would also leave a light in there to see by and he would often come home to find I had left it on all night.’ Will didn’t say the light was in the shape of a little red boat, nor that his father favoured Old Spice, it was irrelevant.

‘Thank you Will. Now, do you want me to serve the main course, or do you think you will eat any more of that,’ Lecter said, seeming to realise that Will needed to take a break. Somehow the dinner was turning into more like a psychiatric session, despite the mutual questioning. It didn’t help that his neck was starting to itch, like there was something moving under his skin.

‘Do you need any help?’ Will said, by way of answering, but Lecter shook his head.

‘No, you are my guest, so sit back and enjoy the wine and I shall return shortly.’

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It was becoming apparent that his mongoose had difficulties interacting with other people. Many people would attribute this, at least in part, to a frequently absent single parent, however his preoccupation with soul mate bonds could hold a key as to his behaviour. In fact, since it was generally assumed that most people had a mark, his question of Hannibal having one could mean that Will himself did not. Combined with the new information of Will being brought up in a relatively unstable, single parent family and Hannibal could start to see how Will’s overly active imagination had been formed. Always the kept on the fringes of peoples gaze, yet always the observer. Will had found a connection to people through observation that he had been unable to form through socialisation.

In any case, it was obvious that he would need to handle Will with more care, as it would not do for Will to leave before he served dessert. If he played his cards right, however, there could even be the possibility that Hannibal would be able to witness Will’s use of insight, but that was for after dinner. To Hannibal’s satisfaction, the meal appeared to be turning out quite excellent; the meat just the right amount of cooked for it to be soft in the mouth and white wine sauce creamy without being heavy.

Hannibal wondered what Will would taste like; though he had the feeling that Will would be a dish far more delicious when savoured slowly with the mind, rather than the tongue. Carrying the plates into the dining room, Will said, ‘I forgot to ask, what is it that we are eating?’

‘Pork, with a white wine sauce,’ Hannibal said and placed the plate down in front of Will, before seating himself.

‘Well it looks excellent,’ Will said, but when he then looked up, his head tilting to the side, Hannibal knew he was not going to like what Will was about to say. ‘So Hannibal, what does your mark look like?’

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Will knew he was going to regret asking that question the moment he asked it, but he was getting sick of feeling on edge and just wanted to return the favour. Hannibal’s eyes did not narrow and he did not frown or show any sign of annoyance other than complete stillness.

‘That was very rude William,’ Lecter said softly and the strange confidence that had made Will ask the question suddenly deserted him. ‘You know I have not looked, I have told you this and you have asked this question in a deliberate attempt to make me feel uncomfortable, so now I have to ask, may I eat my meal first of should I look now?’

Will flushed, an apology on his tongue, despite knowing that Lecter was just calling Will on something that Lecter had done himself. ‘Later, you don’t have to- ***aah!’***

The itching at the back of his neck had increased and Will was tempted to scratch it until the surface was bloody if it would remove what was wriggling beneath his skin. As he raised his hands to touch the skin there, his hands met Lecter’s who had suddenly appeared behind him and was gently pressing his head forward, pushing the hair aside so that he could examine Will’s neck. Will had not known that Doctor Lecter was a medical doctor as well as a psychiatrist.

‘How long has your neck been irritated?’ Lecter said, in a no-nonsense tone that Will had heard from people used to dealing with high intensity situations.

Will thought back and said, ‘about the time you took away the entrée.’

‘I have to ask, you did not have a mark, did you?’ Lecter said and Will frowned, he hadn’t been expecting that question.

‘No, I was born without one. My mother took it very hard…’ Then Lecter’s wording sank in. ‘What do you mean by ‘did not’?’

‘I believe that is what is currently forming on the back of your neck,’ Lecter said and Will could sense him move in to get a closer look. ‘It appears to be a very squiggly circular shape,

with a perfect quartered circle in the lower right quadrant.'

Will froze, his breath nearly slowing down to a stop as he tried to take in this new information. He had a soul mate…

'Now if you will excuse me for a moment, there is something that I must do,' Lecter said, though Will barely heard him, let alone be able to respond before Lecter left the room.

He had a soul mate.

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Looking at the mark on Will's neck, the dark imprint against otherwise fair flesh; the location; the timing… Hannibal had to see.

It would not be dignified to run and certainly the situation did not call for it, but that didn't stop Hannibal's pace from quickening as he walked through the halls of his house. What he was thinking was improbable in the extreme and yet some instinct was demanding that he see. He ***had*** to know.

In all his wildest imaginings…

He had not thought about them in years, he didn't even ***want***…

Didn't want…

Want…

…

Hannibal had never wanted anything so much in his life. Still, his hands did not do anything so ridiculous as tremble when they reached into the bathroom cupboard for a small hand mirror. When he turned around so that his back faced the wall mirror, Hannibal was once again forced to regret the awkward positioning of his mark, as he had to attempt to push his hair out of the way one handed, in order to expose enough of it.

It was the same.

Anyone else would have been tempted to rush down to look at Will's neck to be sure, but Hannibal trusted his mind and there on his neck was the pattern so new to Will's skin. Instead he simply lowered the mirror and rested against the cabinet in silence.

Will was attractive, though he did not put much work into maintaining it. He was thoughtful, possibly too much so, though he was also clearly capable of rudeness. He was intelligent in a ways that Hannibal both was and wasn't and he had the ability to understand Hannibal in a way that no one else could, or at least no one other than himself. Hannibal would have an

audience; someone to compose for other than himself and the mindless FBI agents. Not only that; someone who witnessed and understood the composition as intended.

It gave him ideas.

This news could not be kept to himself for much longer, however, as Will had to be made aware of his new status. He did, after all, now belong to Hannibal and it was with that thought that Hannibal returned to his guest, who looked up upon hearing Hannibal return.

Even to himself, Hannibal had to admit his following actions were rather dramatic; placing the hand mirror on the table, so that his hands were free to take Will's face and place his lips against Will's like a claim. It was not a long kiss, only a moment and when he pulled away Will appeared quite startled. Hannibal silenced him with a finger to Will's lips and passed him the mirror and giving him instructions to the bathroom, though he did follow close behind Will when he went to look. It wouldn't do for Hannibal to miss this moment.

It seemed that Will understood, as he did not question Hannibal, though it did appear that he wished to. When Will stood in front of the mirror, unknowingly mirroring the way Hannibal had been standing only minutes before, Hannibal allowed himself the opportunity to study Will; to take in the line of his neck and jaw and to once again wonder about taste in a manner more closely associated to that of food than the mind.

Will was ***his.***

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From the moment that Lecter… ***no***, it was Hannibal now, declared what was forming on his neck, Will felt like he was slipping into a haze. Soul mates weren't for people like him, people who caused the death of their own mothers just by existing. Will was something that was built wrong; something that belonged on their own because no one knew quite what to do with him. He wasn't supposed to have his biology suddenly declare error when he was already in his thirties, it just didn't work like that.

Will hadn't even begun to think in terms of what had suddenly triggered the sudden formation of his mark. He hadn't even had the chance to wonder who he might be attached to, only that it was now possible for him to attached to someone, before Hannibal was back and then they were kissing. Will's brain was still stuck at five minutes before and then Hannibal's finger was on his lips, replacing his mouth and a mirror was in his hand.

He was standing with his back to the mirror, his eyes peering through the glass in his hand at the dark mark on his neck. It was exactly as Hannibal described. Will looked up to see Hannibal standing in front of him, watching him and he had to wonder if Hannibal always looked at things with such intensity. He did not have long to wonder as the man spun around neatly and fluidly fell down into a kneel, his chin coming to rest at his chest.

Will knew what was expected of him, what Hannibal wanted, but it still took a few moments before he was able to reach down, his hands hesitating before they so much as grazed the neatly styled hair at the base of Hannibal's neck, but even then he could see the bottom of the mark and it was that which finally pushed his hand and then he was smoothing the hair aside.

It was the same.

'You're mine,' Will said, his voice barely above a whisper. Hannibal was handsome and elegant and sophisticated; a person who appreciated the finer things life had to offer and yet Will was all he received.

'And you are mine,' Hannibal said and drew Will's hand away from his neck to pull Will to stand in front of him and then down so that Will was kneeling as well. Will couldn't meet his eyes, flinching when Hannibal's hand came up to cup his cheek, his thumb rubbing gently across the bone line. 'You do not see your own worth, but in time, I think, we shall discover it together. How about that?'

Will could only nod.

End Notes

Thanks for reading. Anyway, I have been thinking about writing a sequel to this, potentially involving Clarice, but I haven't written her character before, so help would be appreciated.

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